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VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE , CALFORNIA

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September 2013

East Bay Radio Tower

Vandalism topples East Bay radio tower

When the supporting wires holding up a large radio tower on Rocky Ridge were cut in July causing it to collapse, many ham radio operators were justifiably incensed with the loss of the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club's repeater.

The tower supported radio communications systems — 2-way, cellular, microwave links, and a ham radio repeater — across the East Bay.

Vandals went through a lot of effort to topple the tower.

It's at the top of a ridge with a long walk and they had to go through gates to cut the guy wires causing it to collapse.

As it turned out, the crime had a silver lining.

The Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club decided to move its APRS digipeater from Rocky Ridge, in the hills above Danville and San Ramon, California, to the North Peak of Mount Diablo. After recovering the digipeater hardware from Rocky Ridge on August 2, a team of five members of the MDARC Tech Committee the next day climbed the North Peak of Mount Diablo in a 4×4 truck re-installed the APRS digipeater and installed an amateur TV station." The digipeater, now 1000 feet higher in elevation, helps to cover an area with a radius as much as 150 miles," says MDARC President Jim Siemons, AF6PU. "According to APRS, the region had virtually no APRS coverage since the collapse of the Rocky Ridge Tower. Now, a much larger area has superior coverage, and may actually lead to APRS devices becoming more popular among ham operators."

Police are still investigating.

Ref: Jim Siemons, AF6PU, Edited by Jerry, KJ6SCC

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I'm a HAM!

No meeting was held in August

President Marcus was unable to attend the meeting.

The following members showed up but were unable to enter the firehouse without a key: Chris Jones-KD7TQO, Art Miller - KI6UXE, Skip Lawson- AF6HC, Gabrill Krukpa - KJ6AZU, and Kim Ware - KI6JNX. They stood around and chatted for awhile, then went home.

But it was a bit of luck for Skip though—He was able to work **EA8TL** (JORGE GARCIA), in the Canary Islands, South West Tenerife, AF, Spain after the "meeting." **5,844 miles short path from his home on 20 meters. Not bad Skip! Congratulations!!**

Has anyone else had any good luck?

Perhaps, in the future, arrangements for the Vice President or any of the board members should have a way to enter the meeting place when the president can't make it.

There are also no notes available from the Board of any meeting they held in an alternate location...if one was held.

Let's face it, it's hard to keep a club active and interesting without any continuity of information or regular communication. *Isn't the cornerstone of ham operating communication?*

Nuff said!

Jerry, KJ6SCC

Vanity Call Sign Fee Goes Up August 23!

ARRL Bulletin 20 ARLB020
From ARRL Headquarters
Newington CT August 22, 2013

To all radio amateurs
SB QST ARL ARLB020
ARLB020 Vanity Call Sign Fee Goes Up August 23!

The new FCC regulatory fee of $16.10 to apply for an Amateur Radio vanity call sign will go into effect Friday, August 23, when the new regulatory fee schedule will appear in the Federal Register.

Earlier this year the FCC had proposed upping the vanity call sign fee from its current $15 to $15.20, but in the Report and Order in MD Docket 13-140, released August 12, the Commission offered no explanation for the higher fee.

In another change, starting in FY 2014, the FCC will require that all regulatory fee payments be made electronically.

The R&O ordered a broad schedule of new fees and waived the usual 30-day waiting period following Federal Register publication, because it feared there would not be time for FY 2013 fees to become effective before the start of the new federal fiscal year on October 1.

The FCC says it expects $230,230 in revenue to cover the costs of administering the vanity call sign program. It anticipates 14,300 vanity call sign applications.

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB--2013

ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Marcus K. Maclean, KI6WDX
Vice President: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Secretary: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6GZB
Director: Arthur Miller, KI6UXE
Director: Richard Craig, KJ6MIB

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Club Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

A Low Cost Antenna Tilt-over Mount

Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC

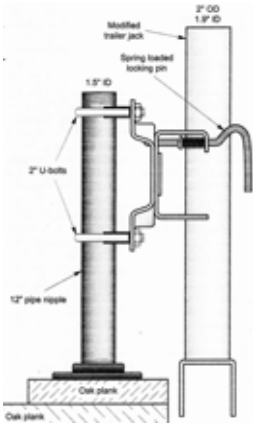
After reading the article titled "*A Different Way to Make a Tilt-Over Mount and Mast*" by Geoff Haines in the March 2013 issue of QST magazine, I thought that would work well on my 4BT Vertical antenna.

The only thing I didn't like about it was the wheel mount that was welded to one end of the jack's tube.

I found a good alternative at Tractor Supply (TSC) in Dixon, and bought it for $25.00. The DXE tilt base cost 62.50 plus tax so I figure I saved about 50% with minimal labor .

It was a simple task to pop the rubber cap off the tilt tube, remove the taper pins from the bevel gears and remove the snap ring from the handle . Slide and discard the wheel tube out of the main pipe and you have it ready to mount to the antenna base.

Haines Original Trailer Jack



Haines finished mount

TSC original trailer Jack

My installation in upright and tilted position

Ham Radio in Space: Boy Scout Jamboree Hosts Space Station Ham Radio Contact

European Space Agency Astronaut Luca Parmitano, KF5KDP, aboard the International Space Station spoke July 20 via ham radio with Scouts attending the 2013 Boy Scouts of America National Jamboree, July 15-24, at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in Mount Hope, West Virginia.

The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program arranged the 2 meter contact between the Scouts' K2BSA and NA1SS.

"What really matters is to be good at what you do," Parmitano told the Scouts. "So, pick something you like, love it and be really good at it." Parmitano also said that the stars look different — more natural — from the ISS but appear the same size as on Earth, as do the planets.

ARISS Technical Mentor Bob Greenberg, W2CYK, coordinated the contact with the Jamboree.

Some 40,000 attendees were anticipated at the National Jamboree over its 10-day run. Amateur radio has been a part of the Jamboree experience since 1953, when K6BSA was on the air from Irvine Ranch in California.

An ARISS direct contact with Space Station Commander Doug Wheelock, KF5BOC, was a highlight of K2BSA's activities during the BSA's centennial National Jamboree at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia, in 2010.

On July 22, students at Colegio Uruguá, in El Pinar, Uruguay, spoke with the ISS crew via LU8YY. An ARISS contact also was scheduled this with students at the Scuola Italiana di Montevideo in Uruguay.

Visitors to the European Space Agency's Space Camp 2013 in Radstadt, Austria, spoke July 24 with the ISS crew via a telebridge between IRØISS and VK4KHZ. The theme of this year's camp is "Space Exploration."

Ref: ***ARRL Newsletter***

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browsw our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please e-mail us at w6vvr@w6vvr.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988. General Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Elmira Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

BSA Troop Club Station KT5BSA Achieves DXCC

Boy Scouts of America Troop 5's club station KT5BSA in Pasadena, California, has become a member of the DX Century Club (DXCC), and the Scouts did it the hard way.

To achieve their goal, troop members set up portable HF stations at various campouts and Scout events, and all 24 troop members contributed to working the DXCC entities needed to qualify, ARRL Southwestern Division Vice Director Marty Woll, N6VI, explained. Travis Williams, AF6WU, is the club's adviser and KT5BSA trustee.

"Travis and his wife, Kjerstin, AF6KJ, have done a fine job with these young hams, providing guidance, encouragement and opportunity to get them active on the air," Woll stated.

ARRL Rocky Mountain Division Director Brian Mileshosky, N5ZGT — an Eagle Scout — called the club's DXCC "a very neat accomplishment, and one I'm sure all of the boys and leaders involved are proud of."

CONGRATULATION TO THESE NEW HAMS

Steven L Fulton, KK6FTJ, Davis;
Dustin E Miller, KK6FLF, Dixon;
Jeffrey R Andrews, KK6FKL, Vacaville.
Shorr, KK6FRT, Benicia;
Francis Ambion, KK6FTX, Travis AFB

CONGRATULATION TO THESE NEW UPGRADES:

Christopher R Jones, KD7TQO, Vallejo;
R Nicholson, KK6EZF, Benicia

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at: vacavalleyradio.net

Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-)
WV6F 440.025(+)
WV6F 1291.900(-)

FCC Cites California Retailer for Marketing Unauthorized RF Devices

Submitted By Marcus, KI6WDX

The FCC has issued aCitation and Order to DNJ Radio of Fremont, California, for violating its rules by marketing non-certified amptfiers and kits via its Internet website. The FCC's San Francisco office investigated complaints and ooconfrmed that DNJ Radio was offering for sale non-certified RM Italy linear amplifiers and ampliflrer kits capable of operation with both CB ll meter transceivers and [Amateur Service] l0 meter transceivers," the Citation recounted.

The FCC said the devices listed in the Citation have not received FCC grants of certification, required for external RF power amplifiers operating below l{4NlJrlzand marketed in the US. The Commission told DNJ to take immediate steps to discontinue marketing unauthorired RF devices. It also gave DNJ Radio 30 days to provide a list of amplifiers marketed and/or imported by RM Italy as well as documentation from that manufacturer on the use of linear amplifiers with both CB and ham radio transceivers. The Commission firrther requested documentation that would help it determine if RM Italy is licensed or authorized to sell or market, import, ship or distribute for sale or lease any certified or non-certified linear amplifiers.

The FCC discounted a disclaimer on DNJ Radio's website that the devices it's marketing "are for industrial, scientific, medical, or export use only" and that using them on 11 meters would violate FCC rules. "The amplifiers...are being offered for sale from within the United States, and anyone within the United States could buy the devices regardless of the disclaimer," the FCC said. Future violations could result in fines of up to $16,000 per violation, the Commission told DNJ.

In June, the FCC issued a Citation and Order to a Nebraska-based online retailer for marketing unauthorized RF devic including l0 and 12 meter amplifiers capable of putting out up to 8200 W - in violation of FCC rules.

In 1917, World War I had put a stop to amateur radio. In the United States, Congress ordered all amateur radio operators to cease operation and even dismantle their equipment.[16] These restrictions were lifted after World War I ended, and the amateur radio service restarted on October 1, 1919.

NET CONTROL OPERATORS

1st week of month-Jerry Bowen; KJ6SCC
2nd week of month-Richard Craig; KJ6MIB
3rd week of month-Chris Jones; KD7TQO
4th week of month-Marcus MacLean; KI6WDX
On months with 5 weeks-Bob Hewitt; K6HEW

THE BIT BUCKET

Bottled Light

In 2002, a Brazilian mechanic came up with a way of illuminating his house during the day without electricity using nothing more than plastic bottles filled with water and a tiny bit of bleach. It came to him during one of the country's frequent electricity blackouts in 2002

It works by simple refraction of sunlight, explains Moser. "Add two capfuls of bleach to protect the water so it doesn't turn green [with algae]. The cleaner the bottle, the better," he adds.

In the last two years his innovation has spread throughout the world. It is expected to be in one million homes by early next year. He makes a hole in a roof tile with a drill. Then, from the bottom upwards, he pushes the bottle into the newly made hole.

An engineer came and measured the light. It depends on how strong the sun is but it provides more or less 40 to 60 watts..

Alfredo Moser: Bottle light inventor with example of installation of light bottles

Moser has installed the bottle lamps in neighbors' houses and the local supermarket.

Ref: Gibby Zobel, BBC World Service, Uberaba, Brazil BBC News - Alfredo Moser: Bottle light inventor proud to be poor 8/13/13 4:05 AM

WE HAVE REASON TO BE PROUD

Throughout the history of amateur radio, amateur radio enthusiasts have made significant contributions to science, engineering, industry, and social services. Research by amateur radio operators has founded new industries,[1] built economies,[2] empowered nations,[3] and saved lives[4] in times of emergency.

Don't flip out about the sun

The Arizona Daily Star ran an interview with Matt Penn, the astronomer who predicted the possible disappearance of future sunspots based on weakening solar magnetic fields. Sun spots are declining over time and could disappear in the next 11-year cycle, Matt Penn predicts.

August 19, 2013 By Tom Beal Arizona Daily Star

Worried about the sun flipping its magnetic poles?

Afraid to let your kids go outside during solar maximum?

Take a tip from Old Sol himself and chill. The sun is experiencing its least active solar maximum in more than a century.

According to NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center:

"We are currently over four years into Cycle 24. The current predicted and observed size makes this the smallest sunspot cycle since Cycle 14," which peaked in February of 1906."

Solar astronomer **Matt Penn** accurately predicted this quiet cycle and now says sunspots and the solar flares that follow their appearance could disappear completely during the next cycle.

Penn and his research partner **Bill Livingston**, both of the National Solar Observatory, have kept a running record of the energy from the magnetic field of sunspots for 13 years.

They are weakening and could reach a historically low number in the next solar cycle, said Penn, equaling inactivity last seen from 1645 to 1715.

It was called the Maunder Minimum and it occurred while parts of northern Europe and North America were experiencing abnormally cold temperatures.

Scientists, including those at NASA, originally pooh-poohed Penn and Livingston's conclusions, but a NASA report on the National Research Council's findings earlier this year concedes that new research bolsters their predictions.

We talked to Penn about recent reports of the sun's activity.

Q: We're at or near solar maximum. should we be concerned?

A: No. Solar maximum really has no impact on the amount of light you can detect with your eyes and no impact on animals or plants. We go through solar maximum every 11 years. It's a normal event. There are more sunspots now, but Solar Cycle 24 is the weakest in the past 100 years — weaker than the previous cycle by a factor of 2.

Q: Discovery Channel recently reported that a huge chunk of the sun's surface had blasted off and is headed toward Earth. Is it time to duck?

A: No, the sun's surface never gets blown off into space. It's just too dense and heavy. Solar flares can take lighter parts of the sun and send them flying through the solar system.

Q: The sun is about to flip its magnetic field. What will that do to us?

A: Nothing. The magnetic fields flip every 11 years. Normally, during a sunspot cycle, people hear all about the great sunspots. Now we see very few and people are talking about magnetic fields. It's a gradual process over a several-month period.

Q: Does space weather affect Earth's weather enough to significantly heat or cool the planet?

A: That's the multimillion-dollar question. We know individual storms and flares don't affect it, but the gradual changes over several months or several years may.

Q: So we can stop worrying about the sun?

A: No. The (1859) Carrington flare (which disrupted telegraph transmissions and caused an aurora across North America) occurred during a weak solar sunspot cycle. We really don't know how to predict when big flares will occur.

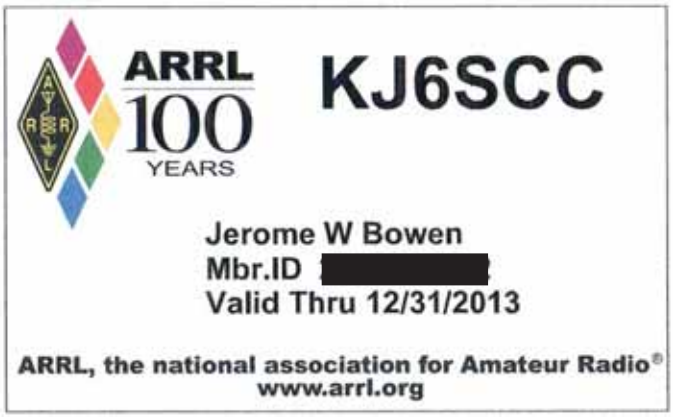
Contact reporter Tom Beal at tbeal@azstarnet.com or 573-4158.

The Jyllands-Posten quotes David Hathaway: *'We now have the lowest solar activity in 100 years,' David Hathaway from American space research institute NASA newly concluded in connection to the release of new figures for the sun's activity. He said the activity for the ongoing cycle is half of the previous cycle, and he predicted an even lower activity for the next cycle, which will hit us in few years."*

British "cockney" pronunciation of "Ham" would sound like "Am", which is short for "Amateur"

ARRL Introduces Centennial Membership Certificate

ARRL membership certificates commemorating the League's 100th anniversary in 2014 now are available. Members logged onto the League's website can generate their own certificates or cards online for printing. "We want each ARRL member to know that he or she is a part of next year's big ARRL Centennial," says Membership Manager Diane Petrilli, KB1RNF. The certificate maker also produces a replacement membership card. The ARRL thanks past McGan Award winner Angel Luis Santana, WP3GW, for suggesting the 2014 ARRL Centennial Membership Certificate, which was designed by ARRL Graphic Artist Diane Szlachetka.



Your name & Call Sign are automatically inserted on the certificate

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PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely — Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____

Street: _____

City: _____Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)

License Class: _____ ARRL Member ? (_____)

E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues	$20.00	_____
Each Family Member	$ 2.00	_____
Student	$ 5.00	_____
Repeater/Autopatch donation		_____
Call/Name badge	$11.00	_____

Optional ARRL membership

ARRL dues	$37.00
Total	

Paid by CASH: Check # _____

DATE: _____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143